

### REMARKS

Claims 1 - 9, as amended hereinabove are in this application.

In the Office Action to which this Amendment is responsive, the Examiner rejected previously pending claims 1 - 9 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the applicant regards as the invention.

In particular, the Examiner indicated that claim 1 was indefinite in its recitation “has a notch groove for continuous drainage from the top surface to the outer circumference at least one place circumferentially”, as being grammatically incorrect and confusing. Claims 2 - 9 were found indefinite because of their dependency on claim 1. Claim 3 was held to be indefinite in its recitation of “the notch groove”, which was held to lack clear antecedent basis. Claim 4 was held indefinite in its recitation of “one of the notch groove”; and in claim 5, the term “the vulcanization” was similarly held to lack clear antecedent basis.

In the Office Action, the Examiner did, however, indicate that all of claims 1 - 9 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the above-mentioned bases for rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph.

Claims 1 - 9 have all been amended hereinabove to overcome all of the respective bases for their prior rejection.

Specifically, with regard to claim 1, the phrase which was the basis for the previous rejection has been rewritten as –has at least one circumferentially positioned continuous notch groove for drainage, extending from said top surface to said outer circumference.--

This, as well as other minor amendments to the format of the claim to make it more readable and to the wording of the claim in order to clarify the reading of the claim have been made to place claim 1 in allowable condition.

In claim 3, the phrae “the notch grooves for drainage are provided at two places opposite each other circumferentially.” has been amended to –two notch grooves for drainage are provided circumferentially opposite to each other.–.

In claim 4, the phrase “one of the notch groove” has been amended to –one of said notch grooves–.

In claim 5, the term “the vulcanization adhering means” has been amended to –a vulcanization adherent–.

Other minor amendments have also been made to claims 2 - 9, to clarify and make them more readable.

No new matter has been introduced by any of the foregoing amendments to any of claims 1 - 9.

The prior art made of record, but not applied by the Examiner to any of the claims, and only considered by the Examiner to be pertinent to applicant’s disclosure, namely, U.S. Patent Nos. 6,585,242 to Kodama et al; 6,543,756 to

Ihara et al; and 6,386,527 to Oberle; as well as published Japanese Patent Application No. 07327946 are noted. Nothing in any of those references is considered to be relevant to allowability of amended claims 1 - 9 of the present application.

For the foregoing reasons, applicant, by his attorney, respectfully requests reconsideration and further examination of the present application in view of this Amendment and accompanying Remarks. Claims 1 - 9 are believed to now be in-condition-for-allowance, the early notification of which is earnestly solicited.

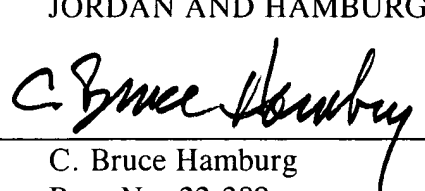
This Amendment is being filed within the original three month term for response. Accordingly, no extension of the time to respond is required and no petition or fee therefor is due at this time.

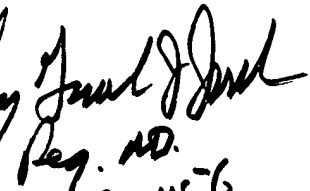
No other fees are believed due with the filing of this Amendment. If, however, any fees are due, they should be charged to Deposit Account No. 10-1250; and any overpayments should be credited thereto.

Respectfully submitted,

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